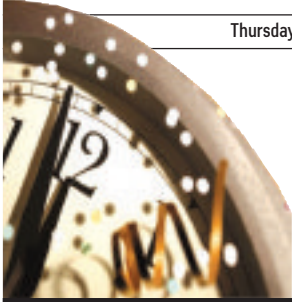


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CRASH HORROR: Emergency services at the scene



Man dies after car hits tree

A NORTHANTS resident has died after his car hit a tree near Burton, Staffordshire, on Tuesday.

The man, in his 60s, was pronounced dead at the scene.

See page 2 for the full story.

'Heartless' crem crooks pile misery on families

BY LAWRENCE JOHN
lawrence.john@HPnorthants.co.uk

FAMILIES have been left heartbroken after a crematorium had to break the news that loved ones' memorial plaques had been stolen by callous thieves.

It has left relatives of people whose tributes were not stolen worried the criminals could return to steal the remaining ones.

The offenders entered the Memorial Gardens at the County Crematorium in Towcester Road, Northampton, and stole 50 bronze plaques sometime between Thursday, December 15 and Thursday, December 22.

But police believe the crime is most likely to have happened overnight on Wednesday, December 21 as muddy footprints were spotted the next morning when staff arrived.

Corporate communications manager Stuart Cox of Dignity Funerals Ltd, which runs the crematorium, said: "Our staff at the crematorium are shocked and disgusted by these thefts.

"The reaction from the families we have contacted has generally been disbelief and deeply emotional.

"Christmas is often a time when families are more conscious of the loss of a loved one so the timing of this crime is particularly shocking.

"We will support these families however we can and all stolen plaques will be replaced at no cost to the families concerned as we would not wish them to suffer financially as well as emotionally because of this heartless act.

"We have informed the police about the thefts and will assist them in any way with their enquiries.

"Our staff remain vigilant to try to prevent this type of act but we try to keep the grounds open at all times to help bereaved families in paying their respects to their loved ones."

Mr Cox added from what officers have told them is that the plaques could be sold to unscrupulous scrap merchants as with so

many other metal thefts across the country. He said the bronze would be inscribed with the personal details of the deceased so it would be obvious they were a memorial taken from a crematorium or cemetery.

A spokeswoman from Northamptonshire Police said: "This is obviously a despicable crime committed at a time when families will be more conscious of the loss of loved ones.

"We are appealing for anybody who may have information regarding people or vehicles seen in the area of the crematorium to come forward either in person or via Crimestoppers."

Anyone with information, should call police on 101.

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Bid to replace stolen chairs

A FUNDRAISING effort has been launched to try to replace 15 specialist basketball wheelchairs which were stolen from disabled children.

We reported last week how the youngsters faced a miserable Christmas after being told about the theft of the wheelchairs which had been stored in a plain box trailer at the Weavers Sports Centre in Weavers Road, Wellingborough.

The RGK Quatro chairs, which each cost £1,000, were used by children of all ages and abilities from across Northamptonshire and also youngsters from outside the county.

Following the theft an appeal for funds towards



UPSET: Last week's front page

replacing the wheelchairs has been launched by the club.

To make a donation, visit www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=_sxclick&hosted_button_id=3JLQGMYYADRB2

Driver dies after his car hits a tree

BY HELEN KREFT

news@hpnorthants.co.uk

A SIXTY-TWO-YEAR-OLD man from the county died after his car crashed into a tree on Tuesday.

The A50 near Burton between junction six at Foston and junction five at Hilton was closed by police after a Jaguar X type car driven from Northamptonshire left the eastbound carriageway and collided with a tree.

West Midlands Ambulance Service was also called to the scene after it received a number of emergency calls at 4.45pm.

It pronounced the man dead at the scene.

An ambulance, a rapid response vehicle, an incident support officer and two BASICS Emergency Doctors were in attendance.

A West Midlands Ambulance Service spokesman said: "On arrival, the crews found a man who had suffered very serious

injuries in a car at the bottom of the embankment.

"Sadly, it quickly became apparent that there was nothing that could be done to save the man and he was confirmed dead at the scene. He was the only occupant of the car."

The A50 stretch was closed by police until 9pm.

A Derbyshire police spokesman said: "A serious crash happened on the A50 between junction five and six, Foston to Hilton stretch and the collision involved an Jaguar X type car which left the carriageway and collided with a tree."

"The driver of the car sustained serious injuries and died at the scene."

"Derbyshire Police have commenced an investigation into the incident and would like to speak to anyone who may have witnessed the incident."

The victim's family has been informed. His name is set to be released by police today.

Cops ready for busy night on the town

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE Police is set for one of the busiest nights of the year in the county's town centres.

Tactics, as part of Operation Nightsafe, have been intensified in the run up to New Year's Eve which can traditionally see a rise in offending behaviour.

Chief Superintendent Richard James said: "We are pleased to report that the Christmas period passed smoothly and we will be policing New Year's Eve in the same way to reduce the risk of crime, particularly violent

crime which is a priority for Northamptonshire Police.

"Operation Nightsafe will be boosting patrols in the main thoroughfares of the county's main town centres as well as areas outside of the town centres, by providing a highly visible presence to help keep order amongst those visiting bars, pubs and clubs and ensure people are able to enjoy their night as they welcome in 2012."

Officers will be checking queues, visiting licensed premises and checking CCTV.

Murder appeal leads to police chiefs probe

BY JULIA SUTTON
news@HPnorthants.co.uk

TWO top Northamptonshire Police officers are among four cops being investigated over claims of misconduct relating to a gangland murder case.

The Independent Police Complaints Commission's (IPCC) probe relates to the handling of an investigation by Staffordshire Police into the murder of amateur footballer Kevin Nunes, 20, who was gunned down in a country lane in 2002. Five men were jailed in connection with the killing in 2008.

The IPCC confirmed that formal notice of investigation had been served on "a number of former and serving Staffordshire Police officers".

It would not confirm reports in The Guardian newspaper that the allegations related to concerns over potentially relevant evidence being withheld from the prosecution in the trial.

Northamptonshire Police Authority confirmed that its Force's Chief Constable Adrian Lee and Deputy Chief Constable Suzette Davenport were being investigated. Mr Lee is also the head of the Association of Chief Police Officers' ethics portfolio.

In a statement the Authority said: "Northamptonshire Police



Deputy Chief Constable Suzette Davenport



Chief Constable Adrian Lee

Authority is aware that the IPCC is managing an investigation into allegations against a number of former and serving Staffordshire Police officers, which relate to the handling of a criminal case from several years ago in Staffordshire.

"We can confirm that allegations have been made in relation to Chief Constable Adrian Lee and Deputy Chief Constable Suzette Davenport, who both served in Staffordshire Police."

"The Authority has considered information provided by the IPCC and remains completely confident in both the Chief Constable and Deputy Chief Constable."

It added: "Any questions regarding the investigation are a matter for the IPCC."

The other officers involved are understood to be Jane Sawyers, Assistant Chief Constable at Staffordshire Police, and Marcus

Beale, Assistant Chief Constable at West Midlands Police.

The probe was launched after the men convicted of Nunes' killing lodged an appeal with the Court of Appeal, which asked the Criminal Cases Review Commission (CCRC) to investigate. The CCRC subsequently referred the case to the IPCC.

Nunes, a drug dealer who had been on the books of Tottenham Hotspur, was shot dead after a gang dispute. His body was found with five gunshot wounds in Staffordshire in September 2002.

His killers - Levi Walker from Birmingham, Antonio Christie and Adam Joof from the West Midlands and Michael Osbourne and Owen Crooks from Wolverhampton were jailed for life after being found guilty of murder by a jury at Leicester Crown Court.

Herald&PostBriefs

PRESENTS FOUND WRAPPED gifts, which appear to be for children, were found in a street.

They were seen by a member of the public in Ladybridge Drive, West Hunsbury, Northampton.

Officers believe the presents were stolen, possibly from a house, and the offenders were disturbed while making their escape. The gifts were addressed to Liam and Laila.

They are now at Weston Favell Police Station.

BAG ROBBERS

THERE was a robbery in Outlaw Lane, Wellingborough on December 21 around 7pm.

A man was followed there by four males who then robbed a yellow bag he was carrying and its contents.

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Richard pitch dream closer

BY LAWRENCE JOHN
lawrence.john@hprhants.co.uk

TWO parents' dream of a new football pitch in an area of Northampton could become a reality later this month.

Both Gail and Richard Butcher will be meeting with officers from Northampton Borough Council on January 26 to discover where the facility could be located.

The couple have been supported in their bid by the community of Far Cotton where they live.

They want the pitch built in memory of their son, who was also called Richard.

The 29-year-old footballer died on January 9 this year at his home in Manchester from what his parents were told was 'adult cot death syndrome'.

Richard was a trainee at both Northampton Town and Rushden & Diamonds before going on to play professionally.

His final club was Macclesfield Town. His parents second reason for wanting the ground built is to provide something

which the whole community can use. On Boxing Day a special fancy dress football match was organised by the Loco Club in Far Cotton towards the scheme.

It helped raise £800 for the kitty which now stands at £11,000.

One of the people who took part was Richard's younger brother Glenn.

Mrs Butcher said the whole occasion was very emotional.

She said: "People in the community have helped us all get through this year.

"Christmas wasn't really Christmas and next month it would have been Richard's birthday and a year since his death.

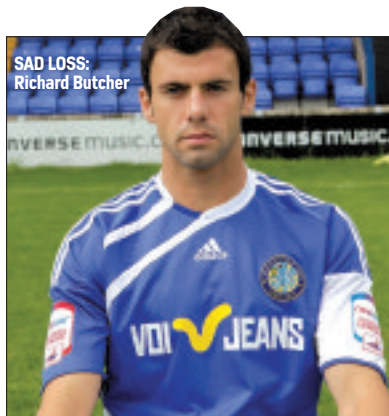
"They say time is a great healer but not when it is your own child.

"The support shown to us by his friends and the community has been great and I am proud to say I come from Far Cotton."

She feels the important thing now is to meet with the council to see where the pitch could be created.

Mrs Butcher added: "We hope the pitch will be situated at Delapre Abbey.

"This is where people in the community would like to see it."



SAD LOSS:
Richard Butcher

Cabbie threatened with blade

A TAXI driver was threatened at knifepoint during a robbery on Boxing Day.

The incident happened on Addison Road, Northampton, near to the junction with Broadmead Avenue, at around 8.30pm.

The driver was called to Addison Road to pick up a fare.

Two men approached the car and said the taxi was for them.

They got into the back of the vehicle before one of the men threatened the driver with a knife and demanded money.

The driver got out of the car and ran away in the direction of Broadway East.

When he returned with

police officers his mobile phones and £20 in cash were missing.

One of the offenders is described as a white man, 5ft 8 tall, aged 27 to 28 and of slim build.

He was wearing dark blue tracksuit bottoms, white trainers and a black hooded top with a scarf over his face.

The second man was also white, 5ft 2 tall, in his late 20s or early 30s and of slim build.

He had a round face and was wearing a light blue t-shirt, dark blue tracksuit bottoms and white trainers.

Anyone with information, should call Northamptonshire Police on 101.

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Cloudy2Clear service the whole of Northamptonshire from their local depots and Trevor is finding that

his ethos is proving to be a major factor in his success. 'When I started out I just did the things that came naturally to me. I really hate being let down by tradesmen so I was determined not to let that happen to my customers. As it turns out that little bit of extra care has meant I get friends and family of people I have done

work for on the phone constantly so it's not just personally satisfying but good for business too. At the end of the day it's not rocket science, is it?'

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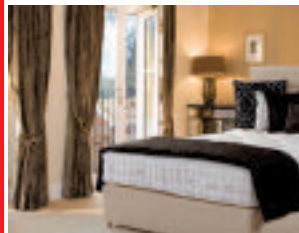
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Supergran gets quizzing

'SUPERGRAN' Ann Timson was back in the spotlight again this week.

The brave pensioner became a worldwide internet sensation after she tackled a gang of hammer wielding jewellery store raiders with her handbag.

Mrs Timson (pictured), who is in her 70s, was on Channel 4's The Big Fat Quiz of the Year, hosted by Jimmy Carr. The panel had to guess why she had been in the news. In May, five



men were jailed for the raid on Michael Jones in Northampton, for a total of 26 years.

They had pleaded guilty to conspiracy to burgle.

Murder suspect held in custody

BY LAWRENCE JOHN

lawrence.john@HPnorthants.co.uk

A MAN in his 40s has been remanded in custody charged with the murder of a pensioner.

Elemer Patakfalvi, 47, of Fulmer Lane, Wellingborough, appeared before Leicester Crown Court last Thursday for a preliminary hearing.

He is charged with the murder of 76-year-old Karoly Varga. Mr Patakfalvi is next due to next appear in

court on April 2 for a plea and case management hearing.

A trial date is yet to be confirmed.

He was arrested shortly before noon on Monday, December 19.

Mr Varga, known locally as Charlie, is believed to have died from head injuries at his home in Cannon Street, Wellingborough, on July 27.

Police are still appealing for witnesses to come forward. Anyone with information should call them on 101.



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WHEN people impersonate Michael Caine one of the phrases they use is 'not a lot of people know that'.

Well here is one of those moments.

The Northampton Borough Councillor who represents West Hunsbury is Brian Oldham, nothing remarkable in that, but did you know he used to be a football scout for Nottingham Forest from 1982/83 to 1997?

This coincided with the time Brian Clough was managing the club (1975-1993) and had in 1979 and 1980 guided the team to two wins in the European Cup.

Cllr Oldham's job was to attend school football matches and youth games in Northamptonshire to try to spot up and coming talent.

He said the only day he had free was Friday when no football was played.

If players were good enough they would get an opportunity to go to Forest and be given a trial.

If they had the talent then they would be given the chance to sign with the club either as a school boy, youth player or professional.

Cllr Oldham said although Clough was manager of the club he didn't really talk to him on a

FOOTBALL scouts try to unearth the talent of tomorrow today. Brian Oldham, who is now a councillor, is perhaps the only one who can claim to have discovered Dr Who with a ball at his feet and given him his break, not in acting, but on the pitch. LAWRENCE JOHN found out more.

day to day basis and only met him on a few occasions.

One of those was when he was sitting in an office talking to Forest's chief scout, Alan Hill.

While they were talking Cloughie burst in and Mr Hill introduced him to Cllr Oldham and explained the role he played within the club.

He shook the great man's hand and thought nothing of it.

Then, as he walked down the corridor, Cloughie shouted out 'What do you look for in a player Brian?'

Cllr Oldham said: "The first thing I would look for is ability and to see if the lad has got the right attitude."

This struck a chord with Cloughie who replied 'That is it young man. Attitude - you can't do anything without it. It doesn't

matter if you are a rocket scientist, a judge or a lawyer if you haven't got the right attitude you won't make it. He'll do fine for us Alan'.

This was a lesson he never forgot.

Cllr Oldham, who was born and bred in Nottingham, didn't become a professional footballer but did sign with his favourite club Forest as an amateur.

However, his dad wanted him to have a trade and so after a few appearances for the reserves his football playing career came to an end.

This thread wasn't picked up until he moved to Northampton in 1982.

When he arrived in the county he managed Blisworth before becoming a scout for Forest.

Among the players he discov-

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STAR TURN: Cllr Brian Oldham and right, Dr Who Matt Smith



ered was Lee Glover, who went on to play for Nottingham Forest in the 1991 FA Cup Final against Tottenham Hotspur, and had a spell as player/manager at Corby Town.

He is currently youth coach at Derby County where Nigel Clough (Brian's son) is manager.

His other spot was Sean Dyche, who used to play for Isle Lodge in Kettering, and then signed for Forest.

Cllr Oldham said when Sean's mum came to Forest, Cloughie spent about 15 minutes talking to her about the importance of family.

Dyche is now the manager of Championship side, Watford.

But Cllr Oldham's most famous

footballing find was a player who never made it to the big time – current Dr Who, Northampton boy Matt Smith.

Taking up the tale, Cllr Oldham said: "With youth footballers if they were under 18 they could only travel a certain distance to a club. In this case we had to have lads come for half a day.

"One of the lads I used to take to the club was Matt Smith who I would collect from Northampton School for Boys and took him to the academy.

"While he was playing at Forest he had a bad injury and then went to Leicester City."

As a scout, Cllr Oldham always wanted to see a player more than once before he would recom-

mend he was sent to Forest. The only exception to this rule was if he had gone to see a player and other clubs were interested.

He would say to Forest 'I have only seen him once but these clubs are close to signing him' so Forest could at least give them a trial.

He explained if he went to watch a player he knew within half an hour whether he was any good.

His diamond theory was if they were good at under ten, better at under 12, improved at under 14 and still showing promise at under 16, then they had a chance.

Cllr Oldham said despite not being involved in the game anymore he has lots of great scouting memories.

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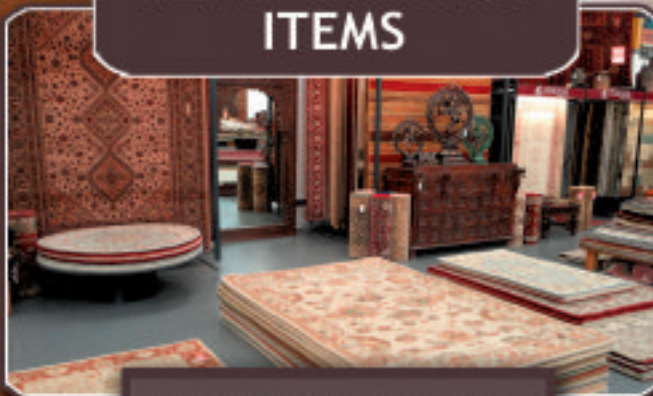
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Cash will log us on to speedy internet

BY LAWRENCE JOHN

lawrencejohn@HPnorthants.co.uk

GOVERNMENT funding worth £4.08 million is expected to trigger work to bring super fast broadband to the county.

This funding will be matched by Northamptonshire County Council to kick-start the process which will invite bids from private companies to carry out the work.

The authority's local broadband plan, which would bring potential internet speeds of 30Mb/sec for every household in the county, is only the fifth to receive the green light nationally.

The Government funding will start once the council has completed the necessary procurement.

County council cabinet member for infrastructure and public protection, Councillor Andre Gonzalez De Savage, said: "High broadband speed will have huge advantages for Northamptonshire

as it will allow the county to be a strong competitor in the global digital economy and allow everyone to have access to new and improved services that are increasingly available online.

"This announcement is a significant step towards everyone having these fast internet speeds and this means we are well on schedule to meet our targets for the initiative.

"In the increasingly competitive global economy it is essential that super fast broadband is widely available and indeed when people are looking to re-locate, fast internet speeds are a key priority."

The authority is aiming for 90 per cent of the county to have speedy broadband speeds by the end of 2015 with 100 per cent coverage by the end of 2017.

The procurement programme is set to start in May with the authority inviting tenders from companies.

It is anticipated that work could begin by the end of next year.

Calls for rural areas to get broadband benefits

OFFICIAL figures from Ofcom show that up to 20 per cent of rural areas are still unable to receive an effective and affordable broadband connection while up to 35 per cent have no access to super fast services at all.

The CLA is calling for Government funding to be spent bringing rural broadband not-spots up to speed.

CLA Northamptonshire chairman, Rupert West, said: "The Government is investing millions in improving broadband delivery

and progress is being made but it is not happening quickly enough in more remote rural areas."

Mr West, who also runs King West land agency at Spencer Parade in Northampton, added: "The rural-urban digital divide is growing at an alarming rate and causing major problems for farmers and landowners with commercial properties who have lost tenants because they cannot offer a superfast broadband connection."

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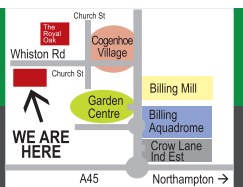
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Group's before you hit 40 'list'

BY LAWRENCE JOHN

lawrence.john@HPnorthants.co.uk

A MEN'S group has put together a list of the top male accomplishments to do before you reach the big 4-0.

Rushden Round Table have produced what it calls the Definitive Top 40 List.

As men across Northamptonshire start to think about making New Year's resolutions, the group has released its guide.

The top 40 includes a wide range of activities, from obvious milestones such as 'completing a bungee jump' to more surreal experiences like 'eating a whole scotch bonnet chilli'.

Vice president of Round Table, Jason Thomson, said: "The aim of the '40 things to do before you're 40' list is to motivate men across the UK to get the most out of life.

"Everything on the list is achievable and indeed lots of our members have already accomplished many of the activities through their involvement with Round Table.

"We wanted to ensure that men in Rushden, and across Northamptonshire, continue to aim high and accomplish some amazing things in their lifetime."

As well as offering once in a lifetime experiences, Rushden Round Table ensures while men are having fun, their local community benefits.

The group is open to all men aged 18 to 45 who want to give as much as they get.

To view the list, and to find out more about joining Rushden Round Table, visit www.roundtable.co.uk/top40

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Photographer wins for his perfect shot

A SNAPPER from Wellingborough is a winner in the first national 'On the Move' competition for disabled photographers.

Nigel Holland won the over 18s category in the scheme which is organised by The Disabled Photographers' Society and Mobility Choice, the charity behind the annual Mobility Roadshow.

Mr Holland captured the picture perfect snap with his Top Fuel Bike action shot (pictured).

He said: "This is the first competition I have entered so I am especially thrilled to win.

"Drag racing is a big passion and I was trying to get a good panning shot.

"This is not easy to achieve with my disability so I am delighted it pleased the judges."

The winners of each category receive a Merlin Annual Pass for entry to a range of top UK attractions for 12 months and a camera bag.

Shortlisted and winning entries will be exhibited at Calumet Photographic, near Euston Station in London, for four weeks from January 7.

Entry is free.

For more information on the Disabled Photographers' Society visit www.disabledphotographers.co.uk and on Mobility Choice at www.mobilitychoice.org.uk

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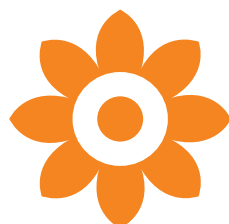
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It's swords at the ready as fencing donation proves 'a great boost'

A SPORTS team will be buying new kit and equipment thanks to a £500 donation.

Northampton Fencing Club, based at Moulton College, is celebrating after receiving the cash from the Mars Refuel Drink Fund.

Founded in 1947, the club became a registered charity in 2008 and has 60 full time members

attending weekly fencing sessions and training. It also actively promotes grassroots fencing at local school and colleges, giving young people the chance to get involved in a sport not usually available to them.

Nicholas Partridge, team coach, said: "With the donation from the Mars Refuel Drink Fund we

will be able to purchase new kit and equipment so we can offer more people in the area the chance to try fencing. This will be a great boost to Northampton Fencing Club as it means we can fence for longer."

The fund was created to help people overcome the financial barriers and to play sport for longer.



New bid to catch criminal

BY LAWRENCE JOHN

lawrencejohn@HPnorthants.co.uk

POLICE have released this artist's impression of a man they are still looking for in connection with an armed robbery.

It happened in the Berrywood Road area of Northampton, between noon and 12.30pm on Thursday, October 6.

The victim was held at gunpoint while two offenders raided the property and stole a quantity of jewellery.

Only one offender was seen by the victim and he is described as white, aged 20 to 27, 5ft 4 tall and of slim build.

He was wearing a grey hoodie, light in colour, a pair of jogging bottoms and spoke with an Irish accent.

Officers believe the man may also have connections with the Thames Valley Police area covering Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire.

Anyone with information, should call Northamptonshire Police on 101 or Crimestoppers, anonymously, on 0800 555 111.



Image released to trace woman

THIS picture has been issued by cops who hope to identify a woman wanted in connection with an incident involving a young child.

It occurred on Saturday, December 3 at about 10am at the post office on St James Road, Northampton.

The woman is described as a black female, about 35 years old, 5ft 1, of a large build and long black dreadlocked hair. She was wearing dark navy jeans.

Anyone with information, should call Northamptonshire Police on 101 or Crimestoppers, anonymously, on 0800 555 111.

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What's On



STUNNING SCENERY: Loh Dalum Bay on Koh Phi Phi

Living the Thai life

HUDDLING up in my sleeping bag, nose pressed on a mosquito net which had definitely seen better days, dreams of sipping champagne and eating canapés in the airport lounge waiting for our flight were a distant memory.

Don't get me wrong, I'm certainly not a snob in any way but roughing it in the jungle of Northern Thailand certainly tested my patience, and immune system.

I mean, how many other married couples can say they spent their honeymoon tickling tarantulas with sticks, sleeping above a herd of (very noisy) cows and showering in a river? If you're one of them you deserve a medal and let's compare bruises!

My new husband and I spent the first few days of our three-week Thailand trip in a four star boutique hotel in Chiang Mai, to which the No 1 Lounge at Heathrow before our 11-and-a-half hour flight was the perfect start.

We spent our days getting out to see the sights - and there's plenty on offer - and even treated ourselves to a cookery course at a farm on the outskirts.

Our accommodation offered the perfect retreat from the hustle and bustle but I don't think anything could have prepared us for where we were about to go next.

We'd agreed that we didn't want to spend three weeks lounging on a beach in one place - don't worry we did get some time to just do nothing and soak up the sun - we wanted to really 'see' Thailand.

So we went for the three-day Northern Hilltribe trek although I



think it was mis-sold to us as a fitness rating 'three' or perhaps our levels started at minus four!

The day before we set off on our adventure we had a chance to get to know the group we were travelling with and much to my husband's delight/disappointment (I think it's easy to guess the right word) he was the only guy with 12 women other than our tour guides Luke and Ken.

We were told the accommodation would be basic.

I don't think you could get any more basic if you tried and it would certainly have given Karl Pilkington a lot to talk about.

Our first night was in a wooden shack and it was in less of a bedroom, more a wooden floor with the thinnest mattresses ever - perfect for newlyweds!

Needless to say I didn't get much sleep but the Chang beers helped a little (yes you can get cold cans in the jungle) and after my freezing shower in the nearby river I was ready to get trekking.

Well, at least I thought I was. Although we didn't actually walk that far (18 kilometres in total) the terrain is tough but the scenery makes it all worth the pain! I never expected Thailand to be so

green but the lush landscape against the impressive mountains and then the gold rice fields is picture perfect.

Even with a cut knee (I managed to slip down the side of one of the mountains) and sore feet, mine and the rest of our group's spirits were lifted when we got to each destination, especially the one where we got to ride an elephant for part of the journey.

We stayed with two different tribes and while their lives are simplistic - very limited electricity and don't even go there about the toilet (or not) facilities - we were quite surprised to see some of them on mobiles and the rice farmers use motorbikes, not elephants, to transport their produce around.

And within an hour of us climbing, in a less than unglamorous way, off our elephant, one of the tribe was in front of us with souvenir photographs - in frames - of everyone on the trip.

Our time in the jungle came to an end on a bamboo raft floating down the Mae Ping river - the perfect finish to rest our feet and reflect on what was an incredible experience that I will never forget.

And I have the scar to remind me if I do!

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What'sOn

Musical adaptation up for a top honour

A THEATRE'S production is in the running for an award.

Nominees for the Whatsonstage.com Awards 2012 have been revealed and Royal & Derngate Northampton's co-production of The Go-Between is up for Best Regional Production. It will be decided by a public vote

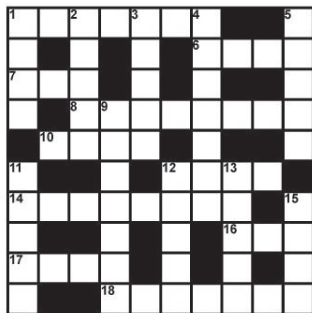
which opened earlier this month.

The winners of the annual awards will be announced on February 12.

The Go-Between, a brand new musical adaptation of LP Hartley's romantic novel, was a joint venture between Royal & Derngate, West

Yorkshire Playhouse and Derby LIVE and received critical acclaim when it played in Leeds, Derby and Northampton in the autumn.

Royal & Derngate's chief executive Martin Sutherland said: "We hope that our audiences who loved the show as much as we did will vote for it online."



QUICKSOLVE?

ACROSS

1. Go forward (7)
6. Walk badly (4)
7. Pimple (3)
8. String of notes (8)
10. Poor soil (4)
12. Tie (4)
14. Dense bushes (8)
16. Pass (3)
17. Chilly (4)
18. A bird (7)

DOWN

1. Cutting tool (4)
2. Essential (5)
3. Quick (5)
4. Tasteless (7)
5. Reel (5)
9. Rogues (7)
11. Adhere (5)
12. African nation (5)
13. Film award (5)
15. Run (4)

SOLUTION FOR LAST WEEK
ACROSS: 1. Happy 4. Yule 7. Star 8. Fun
9. Cold 11. Light 12. Holly 15. Sack 17. Yew
18. Exit 19. Asti 20. Asses
DOWN: 2. Acts 3. Parcels 5. Launch 6. Bell
10. Dickens 13. Ovens 14. Yawn 16. Wine

E	T	H	E	R	E
L	N	H	C	N	E
G	H	O	S	T	D
N	A	C	P	I	A
I	E	A	T	R	P
L	R	R	E	E	T
C	Y	D	R	A	T

MATCH FIVE

Amongst all the five letter words, can you find the five that appear in both grids? (Forwards, backwards, up, down, straight or diagonal)

P	I	L	O	T	T	Y
A	H	P	O	S	I	T
S	C	R	E	P	I	T
T	T	T	U	O	E	U
E	A	R	O	A	D	
R	P	M	A	R	C	H
E	D	A	R	T	H	S

ANSWER: BRAIN STRAIN
OBUSCATE: Bait, Bairo, Calf, Calf, Face, Facet, Fast, Fake, Falso, Faucet, Feast, Feat, Featous, Fest, Festia, Feia, Feus, Focus, Foetus, Fuse, Fust, Outface, Safe, Scuff, Sofa, Soft, Solla, Tolu, Tufa & ???

ANSWER: MATCH FIVE
PATCH, CREPT, TEACH, TRADE, PASTE

FIND THE WORDS

S	R	A	I	M	T	E	N	T	U	S	I	E
S	S	A	M	I	E	R	G	N	G	T	O	T
E	E	E	F	O	E	M	I	E	F	E	G	T
H	D	T	R	B	T	F	U	M	O	T	A	I
T	U	S	B	D	O	P	U	T	E	G	B	R
O	D	G	E	R	R	S	N	S	S	V	A	E
L	B	O	M	Y	A	E	E	E	B	O	R	M
C	E	T	R	I	M	G	B	V	S	I	C	U
T	I	R	T	I	B	A	H	B	T	S	R	T
F	O	F	A	T	Y	E	L	T	O	M	U	D
U	U	R	I	P	M	E	A	N	T	L	U	S
M	V	E	S	T	P	T	I	U	S	D	C	O
L	A	R	A	P	P	A	S	G	S	O	T	C

Find the words: Up, down, forwards, backwards, straight or diagonal. This week: Dress: Habit, Dress, Outfit, Clothes, Garb, Apparel, Multi, Suit, Vestment, Gear, Attire, Raiment, Costume, Get-up, Togs, Uniform, Motley, Clobber, Robe, Duds

E		B	R	A	I	N		O
	U						A	
			F					
		T			C			
B			S	T	R	A	I	N

How many words of four letters or more can you make? No plurals, proper names or foreign words. All must include the centre letter. Good: 18 Maestro: 28+

Nº	1	-	8
Fun!	+	5	÷
28	5	x	9

Use all the numbers and signs to make the star total. Do calculations in strict order from left to right with no brackets - eg 5x9-5+1+8=48

Last week: 7 x 6 - 6 + 3 + 5 = 17

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2007 (07) BMW Z4 M Coupe, met black, full beige leather sports heated seatsm electric seats, windows, mirrors, PAS, ABS, alloys, m/f/s wheels, climate control, air-con, Sat Nav, blue tooth, 6 speed manual, Zensons headlamp washers, fully loaded, very clean, FSH, 60,000 miles£14,995

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2001 (Y) AUDI A6 2.5 TDI Quattro Est, met grey, full black leather trim, electric windows, mirrors, climate control, air con, 6 speed manual, PAS, ABS, a/bags, alloys, radio/CD + changer, xenon head lamps, FSH, 106,000 miles£4,995

2004 (04) VOLVO S60 D5 SE, met grey, full black leather trim, electric seat, mirrors, windows, heated seats, PAS, ABS, alloys, m/f/s/wheel, radio/CD, climate control, FSH, 135,000, very clean£2,995

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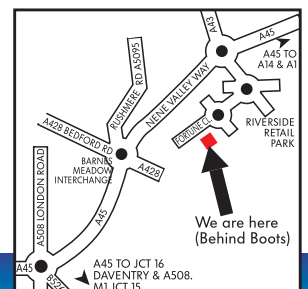
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NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 - SECTION 14
THE NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL (VARIOUS ROADS, NORTHAMPTON)
(TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF THROUGH TRAFFIC) ORDER 2011

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Northamptonshire County Council have made an Order the effect of which is to prohibit traffic from proceeding along those lengths of the various roads in Northampton as specified in the Schedule below.

REASONS FOR RESTRICTION: The restriction is required for safety during urgent sewer relining works to prevent potential collapse.

PERIOD OF CLOSURE: The proposed Order will come into effect on 3rd January 2012 and will continue in force for a period of eighteen months. An application may be made for the approval of the Secretary of State for Transport for the Order to be extended if this proves necessary. However, the restriction specified will have effect only at such times and to such an extent as is indicated by the display of signs prescribed by the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002.

EXPECTED DURATION: It is expected that the roads will be restricted as specified in the Schedule. Where diversions overlap only one road will be closed at a time.

ALTERNATIVE ROUTES: As specified in the Schedule.

Dated this 29th day of December 2011
QUENTIN BAKER
Director of Legal Services

PKG/T12/003
If you require any further information please contact Gary Thorp on 01604-364359.

SCHEDULE	
Road Name	Shakespeare Road, Northampton
Dates	03rd January 2012 until 10th January 2012
Termination Points	Junction of Hood Street to junction of Gray Street
Diversion Route	Traffic heading north use Gray Street, Hunter Street and Burns Street. For traffic heading south use Burns Street, Hunter Street and Hervey Street.
Road Name	Grove Road, Northampton
Dates	03rd January 2012 until 20th January 2012
Termination Points	Junction of Clare Street to just after the junction of Somerset Street
Diversion Route	Traffic heading north use Cloutsham Street, Overstone Road and Clare Street. Vice versa for traffic heading south.
Road Name	Bailiff Street, Northampton
Dates	03rd January 2012 until 20th January 2012
Termination Points	Junction of Duke Street to junction of Craven Street
Diversion Route	
Road Name	Shakespeare Road and Burns Street, Northampton
Dates	11th January 2012 until 01st February 2012
Termination Points	Junction of Colwyn Road to junction of Hood Street and junction of Shakespeare Road for a distance of 70m west.
Diversion Route	Use Hunter Street, Colwyn Road, Hood Street and vice versa
Road Name	Charles Street, Northampton
Dates	17th January 2012 until 20th January 2012
Termination Points	Junction of Connaught Street to junction of Margaret Street
Diversion Route	Use Connaught Street, Robert Street and Margaret Street
Road Name	Robert Street, Margaret Street and Cranstoun Street, Northampton
Dates	23rd January until 10th February
Termination Points	Cranstoun Street and Margaret Street – from junction with Robert Street for a distance of 65m north. Robert Street – from junction with Connaught Street to junction with Cranstoun Street
Diversion Route	Traffic heading east use Bailiff Street, Craven Street and Earl Street. Traffic heading west use Earl Street, Duke Street and Bailiff Street.
Road Name	St Michaels Mount, Northampton
Dates	23rd January 2012 until 10th February 2012
Termination Points	Junction of Derby Road to junction of St Michaels Avenue
Diversion Route	Traffic heading south use Derby Road, Magee Street and Perry Street. Vice versa for traffic heading north.
Road Name	Earl Street, Northampton
Dates	10th January 2012 until 16th January 2012
Termination Points	70m north of junction with Robert Street for a distance of 80m northwards
Diversion Route	For traffic heading south use Military Road, Bailiff Street and Robert Street. Vice versa for traffic heading north.
Road Name	Military Road and Military Court, Northampton
Dates	11th January 2012 until 01st February 2012
Termination Points	Junction of Craven Street for a distance of 83m north
Diversion Route	For traffic heading south use Bailiff Street, Robert Street and Earl Street. Vice versa for vehicles heading north.
Road Name	St Michaels Avenue, Northampton
Dates	01st February 2012 to 17th February 2012
Termination Points	Junction of St Michaels Mount for a distance of 55m westward
Diversion Route	Traffic heading west use St Michaels Mount, Henry Street and Kettering Road
Road Name	Connaught Street and Robert Street, Northampton
Dates	01st February 2012 until 17th February 2012
Termination Points	Robert Street – 10m in either direction of the junction with Connaught Street. Connaught Street – Junction with Roberts Street for a distance of 70m northwards
Diversion Route	Traffic heading east use Bailiff Street, Craven Street and Earl Street. Traffic heading west use Earl Street, Duke Street and Bailiff Street.
Road Name	Hood Street, Northampton
Dates	13th February 2012 until 29th February 2012
Termination Points	Junction of Colwyn Road to junction of Kettering Road
Diversion Route	Use Shakespeare Road, Carey Street, Clare Street and Kettering Road
Road Name	Somerset Street, Northampton
Dates	13th February 2012 until 29th February 2012
Termination Points	Junction of Overstone Road to junction of Grove Road
Diversion Route	Use Overstone Road, Clare Street and Grove Road

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 - SECTION 14
THE NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL (PUBLIC FOOTPATH EU7 – PARISH OF FLORE)
(TEMPORARY CLOSURE) ORDER 2011

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Northamptonshire County Council have made an Order the effect of which is to temporarily prohibit pedestrians from proceeding along that length of Public Footpath EU7 in the Parish of Flore as specified below. Access to land or premises adjacent to the said length of footpath is unaffected.

RIGHT OF WAY TO WHICH RESTRICTION APPLIES: The path to be closed is EU7 (part) in the Parish of Flore.

The existing route to be closed begins at Point A on the map at National Grid Reference (NGR) SP 64844 60284. It then travels 52 metres east of north to Point B at NGR SP 64867 60326. From Point B it heads north east for 204 metres to Point C at NGR SP 65048 60415. The route then proceeds east for 179 metres to Point D at NGR SP 65223 60381. From here the route travels 156 metres north east to Point E at NGR SP 65375 60420. The route then heads 134 metres south east to Point F at NGR SP 65486 60340. The path then travels north east passing under the overpass of the M1 to Point G at NGR SP 65542 60422. The route then goes 211 metres north of east to Point H at NGR SP 65749 60447.

The path is shown on the map by a solid black line between A – B – C – D – E – F – G – H.

REASONS FOR RESTRICTION: The restriction is required to enable tree felling and soil drilling on the embankment near the M1.

PERIOD OF CLOSURE: The proposed Order will come into effect on 10th January 2012 and will continue in force for a period of six months. An application may be made for the approval of the Secretary of State for Transport for the Order to be extended if this proves necessary. However, the restriction specified will have effect only at such times and to such an extent as is indicated by the display of notices.

ALTERNATIVE ROUTE: The alternative route begins at Point A on the map at NGR SP 64844 60284, and travels south east along the highway of the A45 for 509 metres to Point I at NGR SP 65267 60028. It then heads into the lay-by and then continues to follow the footway of the A45 for 1148 meters to Point J at NGR SP 66339 59681. The route then heads generally north 990 metres along an unclassified road passing over the M1 to Point K at NGR SP 66516 60598. It then travels generally west for 652 metres along public footpath EU18 to Point L at NGR SP 65908 60396. The route then follows footpath KT5 west for 176 metres to its junction with EU7 and Point H on the map at NGR SP 65749 60447.

The alternative route is shown on the map by a broken black line between points A – I – J – K – L – H.

Dated this 29th day of December 2011
QUENTIN BAKER
Director of Legal Services

PKG/ROW/021
If you require any further information please contact George Massingham on 01604 634349.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 - SECTION 14
THE NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL (VARIOUS ROADS, NORTHAMPTON)
(TEMPORARY TWO WAY TRAFFIC) ORDER 2011

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Northamptonshire County Council have made an Order the effect of which is to introduce temporary two way traffic system along those lengths of the various roads in Northampton as specified in the Schedule below.

REASONS FOR RESTRICTION: The restriction is required for safety during urgent sewer relining works to prevent collapse. Restriction in place only when corresponding roads are closed.

PERIOD OF CLOSURE: The proposed Order will come into effect on 3rd January 2011 and will continue in force for a period of eighteen months. An application may be made for the approval of the Secretary of State for Transport for the Order to be extended if this proves necessary. However, the restriction specified will have effect only at such times and to such an extent as is indicated by the display of signs prescribed by the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002.

EXPECTED DURATION: It is expected that the roads will be restricted as specified in the Schedule below.

ALTERNATIVE ROUTES: As specified in the Schedule.

Dated this 29th day of December 2011
QUENTIN BAKER
Director of Legal Services

PKG/T12/002
If you require any further information please contact Gary Thorp on 01604-364359.

SCHEDULE	
Road Name	Somerset Street, Northampton
Dates	03rd January 2012 until 20th January 2012
Termination Points	Junction of Grove Road to junction of Overstone Road.
Road Name	Margaret Street, Cranstoun Street and Charles Street
Dates	23rd January 2012 until 10th February 2012
Termination Points	Entire lengths of each road.
Road Name	St Michaels Avenue, Northampton
Dates	01st February 2012 until 17th February 2012
Termination Points	Entire length

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 - SECTION 14
THE NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL (PUBLIC FOOTPATH EY2 (Part) – LONG BUCKBY)
(TEMPORARY CLOSURE) ORDER 2011

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Northamptonshire County Council have made an Order the effect of which is to temporarily prohibit pedestrians from proceeding along that length of Public Footpath EY2 in the Parish of Long Buckby as specified below. Access to land or premises adjacent to the said lengths of footpath is unaffected.

RIGHT OF WAY TO WHICH RESTRICTION APPLIES: The path to be closed is EY2 (Part) in the Parish of Long Buckby.

The existing route to be closed begins at Point A on the map at National Grid Reference (NGR) SP 61729 66986. From Point A it travels generally south west for 377 metres to Point B at NGR SP 61499 66691. The route then travels a further 186 metres to the bridge at Point C at NGR SP 61338 66599.

The path is shown on the map by a solid black line between points A – B – C.

REASONS FOR RESTRICTION: The restriction is required for the construction of wind turbines.

PERIOD OF CLOSURE: The proposed Order will come into effect on 3rd January 2012 and will continue in force for a period of six months. An application may be made for the approval of the Secretary of State for Transport for the Order to be extended if this proves necessary. However, the restriction specified will have effect only at such times and to such an extent as is indicated by the display of notices.

ALTERNATIVE ROUTE: The alternative route begins at Point A on the map at NGR SP 61729 66986 and travels south west for 224 metres to Point D at NGR SP 61537 66870. It then proceeds south west for 336 metres to the bridge at Point C at NGR SP 61338 66599.

The alternative route is shown on the map by a broken black line between points A – D – C.

Dated this 29th day of December 2011
QUENTIN BAKER
Director of Legal Services

PKG/ROW/020
If you require any further information please contact George Massingham on 01604 634349.

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NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 - SECTION 14
THE NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL (WHARF ROAD, HIGHAM FERRERS)
(TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF THROUGH TRAFFIC) ORDER 2011

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Northamptonshire County Council have made an Order the effect of which is to prohibit traffic from proceeding along that length of Wharf Road, Higham Ferrers as set out below.

LENGTH OF ROAD TO WHICH RESTRICTION APPLIES: That length of Wharf Road, Higham Ferrers from the junction of Saffron Road to junction of High Street.

REASONS FOR RESTRICTION: The restriction is required for safety during construction of a new central island crossing point and associated kerbing works.

PERIOD OF CLOSURE: The proposed Order will come into effect on 2nd January 2012 and will continue in force for a period of eighteen months. An application may be made for the approval of the Secretary of State for Transport for the Order to be extended if this proves necessary. However, the restriction specified will have effect only at such times and to such an extent as is indicated by the display of signs prescribed by the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002.

EXPECTED DURATION: It is expected that the road will be restricted until 31st January 2012.

ALTERNATIVE ROUTES: For traffic heading east use Saffron Road, Cemetery Lane and College Street. The route is vice versa for traffic heading west.

Dated this 29th day of December 2011
QUENTIN BAKER
Director of Legal Services

PKG/T12/001
If you require any further information please contact Gary Thorp on 01604-364359.

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ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 - SECTION 14(1)(a)
THE A14 TRUNK ROAD JUNCTION 1(NORTHAMPTONSHIRE) (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) ORDER 2011

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Secretary of State for Transport has made an Order on the A14 Trunk Road at Junction 1, in the County of Northamptonshire in connection with work taking place at M1 Junction 19 (Caththorpe).

The effect of the Order will be to close the slip road leading from the westbound carriageway of the A14 at Junction 1 to its junction with the A5199.

The closure is expected to come into effect at 2200 hours on Friday 6 January 2012 and last for 24 days. The Order will come into force on 4 January 2012.

Vehicles being used by the emergency services will be exempt from the closures. A diversion route via the M1 Junction 19 will be well signed.

For further information, please contact John Bower, Project Manager on behalf of the Highways Agency, on 07966 249654.

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 - SECTION 14(1)(a)
THE A5 TRUNK ROAD (WEEDON TO KILSBY, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE) (TEMPORARY RESTRICTION AND PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) ORDER 2012

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Secretary of State for Transport intends to make an Order on lengths of the A5 Trunk Road between Weedon and Kilsby in the County of Northamptonshire to allow resurfacing and general maintenance work to be carried out.

The effect of the Order will be to at different times -

- (a) close the northbound and southbound carriageways of the A5 from its junction with the A45 (Weedon Crossroads) to its roundabout junction with the A361 at Kilsby;
- (b) impose a 40 miles per hour speed restriction on the northbound and southbound carriageways of the A5 from a point 300 metres north of its junction with the A45 (Weedon Crossroads) to its roundabout junction with the A361 at Kilsby ;
- (c) impose a 10 miles per hour speed restriction on lengths of the A5 described in (a) when signs indicating "convoy working" are being displayed; also
- (d) close any layby adjacent to the lengths of A5 described in (a) above; and
- (e) prohibit overtaking on the lengths of A5 described in (a) above.

Work will be carried out overnight between 20:00 hours and 06:00 hours and is expected to start on Monday 14 January 2012 and continue for approximately eleven weeks. The no overtaking prohibition described in (e) above and the layby closure described in (d) above will apply 24 hours a day during the work period. The Order will come into force on 13 January 2012.

Vehicles being used by the special forces will be exempt from the speed restrictions. Vehicles being used by the emergency services will be exempt from the speed restrictions, closures and prohibitions. Vehicles being used in connection with the works will be exempt from the closures. Access to property will be maintained at all times. Diversion routes via the A45 Daventry, A425 and A461 and vice versa will be well signed.

For further information, please contact Helen Beech, Project Manager on behalf of the Highways Agency, on 01623 886 556.

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 - SECTION 14(1)(a)
THE A45 TRUNK ROAD (NORTHAMPTON) (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) ORDER 2012

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Secretary of State for Transport intends to make an Order on the A45 Trunk Road, in the County of Northamptonshire to allow bridge inspection works to be carried out.

The effect of the Order will be to -

- (a) close the slip road leading -
- (i) to the westbound carriageway of the A45 from its roundabout junction with the A5076 (Great Billings interchange);
- (ii) from the eastbound carriageway of the A45 to its roundabout junction with the A5076 (Great Billings interchange);
- (iii) to the west bound carriageway of the A45 from its roundabout junction with the A43 (Lumbertubs interchange); and
- (iv) from the eastbound carriageway of the A45 to its roundabout junction with the A43 (Lumbertubs interchange).

The work will be carried out over four nights between 21:00 hours and 06:00 hours and is expected to start on Monday 16 January 2012. The Order will come into force on 13 January 2012.

Vehicles being used by the emergency services and vehicles being used in connection with the works will be exempt from the closures. Diversion routes via alternate junctions on the A45 will be well signed.

For further information, please contact Steven Longden, Project Manager on behalf of the Highways Agency, on 01623 886637.

Mike Lloyd, A Higher Executive Officer in the Highways Agency



SEEING RED: John Johnson (kneeling) is sent off as team-mate Jake Robinson throws his arms up in protest



'I've hit a black cat'

Boothroyd bemoans lack of luck in Cobblers defeat to Burton

BY MARC BAZELEY
marc.bazeley@thepnorthants.co.uk

LUCK perhaps plays more of a role in professional sport than anyone involved in it would care to admit. Such is the nature of it, that anyone speaking about the bad variety when things go against them is often accused of clutching at straws.

Try telling that to Northampton Town boss Aidy Boothroyd though, particularly after the 3-2 Boxing Day defeat at home to Burton Albion in a real festive feast that had plenty of drama, controversy and goals.

Two goals in the first two minutes even as Saido Berahino's opener was swiftly cancelled out by Cleveland Taylor. However, Northampton retook the lead from a Michael Jacobs penalty before John Johnson was sent off for an elbow on John McGrath.

The ten men were able to hold out until the 61st minute when Chris Palmer evened things up, and an 86th minute penalty from fellow substitute Justin Richards ensured the visitors took all three points.

Boothroyd said: "I've got to be careful where I drive in future because I've obviously hit a black cat somewhere along the line, but it does turn and that's what happens when you are where we are."

"But if the players perform like that from now until the end of the season then we will beat a lot of teams."

"We didn't deserve it, but you don't always

get what you deserve in football. You've got to keep at it and Burton are going well at the moment."

"Paul Peschisolido [Albion boss] came up to me afterwards and said, 'unlucky', because he is a decent guy and he knows we were absolutely terrific."

"I said to the players, 'don't go out of here feeling sad', because we've got to keep that going and we've got to maintain that momentum."

"We didn't get caught up in the referee's decisions, although they were disappointing. We kept going, we scored goals, we hit the post and we actually had three off the line."

The old adage of the harder you work, the luckier you get could well apply here, and Boothroyd's first hope in those stakes will be that the FA overturn Johnson's red card after the club appealed against it. They will find out the result of that this afternoon.

"If you keep that belief and work ethic then you've got a very good chance," said the Cobblers manager.

"You've got to be tough, you've got to be brave and you've got to show courage. The easiest thing in the world to do is to melt and go into your shell, but not one player did that."

"They stood up, they were strong and it's not all about winning tackles – it's about getting hold of the ball and being brave enough to get on it, and to keep running

when you don't think you're going to get it and turn bad balls into good."

Northampton's last game of 2011 is on Saturday when they host Swindon Town, followed by a Bank Holiday Monday trip to Shrewsbury Town.

That means Boothroyd can then start to put the wheels in motion for his January transfer plans.

It looks as if veteran former Scotland international Christian Dailly, who was released by Portsmouth in August, could well be on his way to Sixfields after the defender was spotted at the Burton defeat.

Boothroyd also admitted recently that he has another five or six potential targets, although how many he will be able to bring in also depends upon which members of the current squad will leave when the transfer window re-opens.

"I said it was about the three time zones and we're coming to the end of time zone one," he said.

"But all the way along my mandate until January was to make sure that we get the best out of them."

"Every single player has made the choice to step up and I think they were terrific. Obviously I'm disappointed and performances are what count."

"If you get lucky and get a few results because of it then fine, but in the end it's about being consistent and performances being consistent."

'Emotional' Eustace calls time on career

RUGBY UNION

ADAM Eustace has been forced to end his rugby career with immediate effect due to a neck injury that he sustained earlier in the season.

The lock joined the club in the summer of 2010 having made over 200 appearances for fellow Aviva Premiership side Gloucester over two separate spells.

Eustace has been limited to just four appearances for the Saints during the past two seasons in a spell that was blighted by injury.

The 32-year-old has now retired from the professional game, saying: "It's been hard to take on the chin, and I'm pretty emotional about it to be honest."

"When I came to Northampton I wanted to make an impression. I knew it was always going to be tough with so many good players, but unfortunately I've not been able to fulfil my personal goals. I feel really bad and somewhat guilty that I've not been able to repay Jim Mallinder and Dorian West for bringing me to the club and the fans for their good wishes. For the first time in my career I've had one injury after another and it's been very frustrating to say the least. I'm indebted to the club for giving me all the time I've needed to get myself back, but unfortunately I've been given the advice from specialists to stop playing."

Eustace is aiming to stay involved in the game by getting into coaching or community development, and Saints director of rugby Mallinder wished him well for the future.

He added: "Adam had shown throughout his career that he was a quality and experienced campaigner and we thought he would bring a great deal to Franklin's Gardens."

"While Adam has been a good person to have around the squad and contributed a great deal behind the scenes it is very unfortunate that he has not been able to show the fans his abilities as a player in the first team."

James eyes world top 32

DARTS

JAMES Richardson has his eyes on establishing himself amongst the PDC's top players in 2012 after exiting the Ladbrokes World Darts Championship in the second round.

The Rushden player had caused one of the biggest upsets in the history of the tournament by defeating five-times world champion Raymond van Barneveld in the first round.

However, he suffered a 4-1 defeat at the hands of Belgian Kim Huybrechts in his second match on Tuesday evening to bring his debut at the Alexandra Palace to an end.

Richardson was nonetheless delighted with how his first year on the PDC tour had gone and is now aiming for further progress next year.

"If you'd told me when I came through qualifying school back in January that I'd beat Raymond van Barneveld in the World Championship in my first year I'd have bitten your hand off but it's been great," he said. "My aim is to press on towards the top 32 over the next year, and I've shown that I've got the game to do that in this tournament."

Huybrechts took the first set, only for Richardson to seal the second with a 140 checkout. However, from then on his opponent took control of the match and won the remaining three.

Richardson said: "Kim was by far the better player and outplayed me for much of the game. I wasn't affected after the huge reaction after my win over Raymond van Barneveld. I felt ready for the challenge, but lost to the better player on the night."

The 37-year-old now starts his preparations for the 2012 season, with the first tournaments of the new year being two Players' Championship events in Benidorm on January 28 and 29.

FOOTBALL

FORMER Rushden & Diamonds star Kevin Wilkin has given his backing to the replacement fans' club ahead of their friendly against Nuneaton Town's under-18s.

Wilkin, who scored 43 goals in 95 appearances for the Diamonds, is now manager of Blue Square Bet North side Nuneaton and has been since hanging up his boots in 2006.

Their youngsters take on AFC Rushden & Diamonds in a friendly at Wellingborough Town's Dog and Duck Ground tonight, with the ex-Rushden striker keen to help.

"It's gutting to see what has happened," said Wilkin. "It is a club which will always be dear to my heart and anything I can do to help I will do. I know at the start of the season our chairman gave AFC R&D a couple of kits for them to play some friendlies in and we would like to continue that relationship. What the fans have done off the pitch has been amazing and we will help in whatever way we can in the future."

H&PSPORT

Boss Boothroyd
blames bad luck
for Burton defeat
— page 35



Lamb is proving top gun in a stand-off with Myler

BY MARC BAZELEY
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IN Ryan Lamb, Northampton Saints may well have struck upon a credible rival to Stephen Myler for the number ten shirt. Indeed, the fly-half has recently established himself as the first choice on the back of some impressive performances.

Not that director of rugby Jim Mallinder ever likes to label anyone the 'number one'. "He's got the shirt at the moment and he is playing well," was as far as the Saints boss would go after Lamb starred in the 22-13 Aviva Premiership win at home to Bath on Christmas Eve.

Signed from London Irish in the summer, the 25-year-old arrived at Franklin's Gardens with a reputation of being a bit of a maverick on the field, not unlike the man who he replaced – Shane Geraghty – who left for France after failing to usurp Myler's position.

The signing of Lamb again gives Northampton different options at stand-off, with former rugby league player Myler evolving into more the stereotypical 'English' number ten and Lamb being the 'flair' player.

"They do play slightly differently," said Mallinder – the master of the understatement – adding: "But they can both play that attacking game when we want to get us on the front foot and also that kicking game."

"I thought Ryan's kicking was fantastic and I think his goal kicking has also improved."

"He's had a great season for us. He is keeping Stephen Myler out of the team and Stephen played so well towards the end of last season in particular. He played well in the European Cup final, so Ryan Lamb is doing something well to keep him out of the team."

In many ways, Lamb's performance on Saturday was a microcosm of Northampton's season – sublime in the first half and slightly erratic during the second as they temporarily moved into the top four, only to drop back down to sixth after the Christmas games were completed.

He pulled the strings for the Saints as they raced into a 22-3 lead at half time on the back of tries from Phil Dowson, Tom Wood and Jamie Elliott, while Lamb also kicked two penalties and a conversion.

Yet Northampton failed to make an impression on the score sheet during the second period and missed out on the fourth try that would have secured a bonus point. They were not helped by the sin-binnings of replacement Samu Manoa and James Downey that left them temporarily down to 13.

Referee David Rose was a busy man all afternoon, with Bath having both Nick Abendanon and New Zealand World Cup winner Stephen Donald yellow carded as well. But although they did get a try through skipper Francois Louw, while having the two-man advantage, the visitors were well beaten.

Mallinder said: "I thought he [Lamb] was very good, particularly in the first half when he was outstanding. He sees space, he gets our game going and we're very pleased with his progress."

"He probably made a couple of mistakes out there, but it was tough conditions. They had got a world-class number ten playing for them [Donald] and I thought probably Ryan was the better of the two."

The Saints now head to struggling Newcastle Falcons on New Year's Eve and Lamb will be hopeful that he has done enough to keep his place in the side. However, with Myler waiting in the wings, nothing is certain.



YOU BOOTY: Ryan Lamb is currently keeping Stephen Myler out of the Saints side

picture by Andy Kearns

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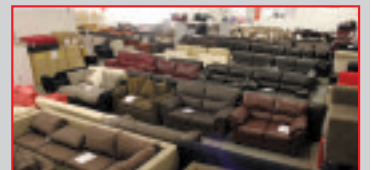


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